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Maxwell's Demon

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Maxwell's Demon

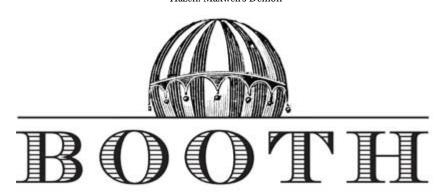
Abstract

"By dint of his prodigious intelligence and dexterity, the goblin could cause things to happen that are never seen to occur in nature, things that seemed able to violate the second law of thermodynamics."

-Hans Christian Von Baeyer

Keywords

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Maxwell's Demon

A Poem by Elizabeth Hazen

"By dint of his prodigious intelligence and dexterity, the goblin could cause things to happen that are never seen to occur in nature, things that seemed able to violate the second law of thermodynamics."

-Hans Christian Von Baeyer

Maxwell's Demon, diminutive imp, you spit on the law of entropy through the fork in your thick, black tongue. You claw open trapdoors of closed systems, let heat pass through, shut out the cold. Your lies could keep my coffee hot all day. You want to hold the hands of the clock steady, hold gravity in check, un-sag my skin, change

the nature of my longing, but even you cannot exist without consequence: your gaze alone alters everything you see. Like mine, Booth, Vol. 3 [2011], Iss. 12, Art. 2

your presence interferes, unbalances, warps: rubbernecking backs traffic up for miles, slows the ambulance's progress, causes fender benders, arguments, missed appointments, backseat births.

My weeping can't reverse a bullet, but my limbic system shifts; the scent of day-old lilies fills me, henceforth, with a sense of dread. Darling liar, you promise endless heat, backwards motion, do-overs. This time I know exactly what to say. I *will* pick up the phone this time. This time I'll tell him, *Wait*.

Elizabeth Hazen's poems have appeared in *Southwest Review*, *The Threepenny Review*, *Salamander*, and other journals. She lives in Baltimore.



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